



MEMORANDUM



DATE: January 8, 2004

TO: ALL DEPARTMENT TRAINING OFFICERS

FROM: Evelyn Hemenover
Division Chief
Training Division
(916) 445-5121, fax (916) 324-4050

SUBJECT: MINUTES – DTO Meeting for December 16, 2003

The quarterly Department Training Officer meeting was held on December 16, 2003 from 9:00 to 11:30 a.m. at the State Training Center, 1515 S Street, North Building, Suite 108, Sacramento, California. Refreshments were provided, compliments of the STC Staff and the DTO Advisory Board.

I. WELCOME (9:00 – 9:10 a.m.)

Evelyn Hemenover welcomed the meeting attendees and thanked them for their valued partnership and support. STC staff and the Department Training Officer Advisory Group provided refreshments for the meeting attendees as a way to express our gratitude for their continued business. Special thanks to Paula Sahleen-Buckingham, Teresita Madani and Jill Hayashida, STC staff who set up the beautiful refreshment buffet.

II. TRAINING DIVISION BUSINESS (9:10 – 9:30 a.m.)

Evelyn referenced the recent Executive Order S-4-03, which requires departments to cancel or postpone any non-essential trips such as seminars, conferences or training. She reminded DTO's that STC can bring the trainer to your site at a substantially reduced tuition rate.

Kitty Williamson, Chief of STC's Operations Branch, discussed the shift in reasonable accommodation procedures due to technological changes. Many departments now have technology available to produce documents in Braille or "read" class materials to sight-impaired individuals. When STC receives a request for reasonable accommodation for a class participant, we will check with the individual to find out what accommodations are made for them at their worksite and proceed accordingly.

Please let us know if you have any participants that may require special assistance, even if it is not a typical impairment. For example, if a participant requires special seating arrangements, i.e. an ergonomic chair or an oversized chair, indicate this special accommodation on the registration form.

George Steinert, Manager of the Training Services Section, said that the new Disability Employment Law information is now ready for inclusion in the Basic Supervision class. If you need this information for in-house supervisory training, you may obtain a copy by calling Michael Paravagna at (916) 263-8663. Michael is Chief of the Department of Rehabilitation's Disability Access Unit.

Brian Koepp, Manager of the Special Programs Section, reminded the attendees about the online courses offered by our virtual classroom and the different training libraries offered in our *My SkillSource* Self-Paced Web-Based Training. Online training eliminates travel costs and supports the Governor's Executive Order prohibiting non-essential travel expenses.

III. THE ART OF RECOGNITION (9:30 – 10:20 a.m.)

Kathleen Evans, Director, Quality and Training Services, from the State Teacher's Retirement System, talked about her involvement in the development of the booklet published in 1997, *The Art of Recognition*. This booklet continues to be relevant today. It suggests recognition methods that might be used in State government. Some the ways that STRS shows employee recognition are as follows:

- Certificates
- Gold and Blue Star balloons
- Blow-up Thank You notes
- Thank You cards
- Thank You stickers
- Trophies
- Standing Ovation awards – the recipient might receive a picture, coffee mug, umbrella, portable calculator, etc.
- Informal Time Off

Some of the ways that other departments have demonstrated appreciation are:

- Letter of commendation from manager/supervisor
- Kudos in the weekly staff meeting
- Verbal recognition in front of peers
- Personal gift
- Publish complimentary letters from customers in employee newsletter

Departments who wish to establish a recognition program are reminded to contact their Personnel Officer and Labor Relations Officer. The proposed program should be submitted to DPA Labor Relations and DPA Policy analysts to determine if further action is required.

If you would like more information on this subject, you can access *The Art of Recognition* booklet at <http://www.strs.ca.gov/publish/printed/artofrec1297.pdf>. If you would like more information from Kathleen Evans, her e-mail address is kevans@calstrs.com.

IV. CONTENT SESSION – TICKLISH TACTICS FOR TENSE TIMES (10:35 – 11:15 a.m.)

Polly Schack, founder of "Planet Mirth" led a lively discussion on the use of humor to problem solve and reduce stress in the workplace. Polly stressed that it's not the content you are sharing with your audience, it's your investment in the content, or the way you tell it. Humor should be A, T, & T:

- A – Appropriate
- T – Timely
- T – Tasteful

Humor has been known to lower blood pressure, relax, rejuvenate, and reframe life's problems. Some tips from Polly:

- Watch small children – remind yourself you were a kid
- Laugh at yourself; what's different about you?
- Create a playful environment around you
- Begin the day with some "humor aerobics"
- Look at and do things differently
- Pay attention to what's going around you – jot it down
- Watch for bumper stickers; note those that tickle you
- Spend time with the "elders" – they come up with "doozies"
- Go to greeting card stores; read/laugh – send one to yourself
- Take a funny picture of yourself with a friend – frame it
- Cut out your favorite cartoons; place them around the house
- When you're in conflict, remember "do-overs" and "verbal Aikido"
- Look for/create "humor happenings" in different places
- Establish rituals to enhance daily joy
- Ask how our favorite comedian would handle a difficult situation
- Relax physically/mentally throughout the day – breathe!
- Make a list of what "bugs" you – creatively dispose of it
- Share yourself, step out, take risks
- When you face difficulties, think: "How could this be worse?"
- Practice telling a new joke/story to 3 people in a day – note reactions and notice how much better you get
- Write a zany song with your co-workers/friends, sing it at the next meeting you have
- Pull out the props and pull out the stops
- Keep funny stuff to read by the telephone – smile
- Remember "thinking funny" comes easier with practice
- Be "silly" at least once a day

For more information from Polly, call (916) 444-6934.

V. ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION (11:15 – 11:30 a.m.)

Someone asked for clarification of the term "essential training" in the most recent Budget Letter issued by the Department of Finance. DPA's response this question would be any training that is required by the Department, that is, "job-required" training would be considered "essential". Job-related training may also be considered by the Department to be "essential" depending on the individual circumstance. Non-essential training might be career-related type training.

Lynn Novi, from the Employment Development Department, has several training classes online, specifically, Travel Training, New Employee Orientation, Safety Training and Workplace Violence Prevention. EDD University also has videos available to check-out. For more information, contact Lynn at Lnovi@edd.ca.gov.

Department of Justice also has a Safety Training class on-line. For more information, contact Mary Hollister at Mary.hollister@doj.ca.gov.

The dates for the next DTO meetings are as follows:

March 18, 2004

June 15, 2004

September 14, 2004

December 14, 2004

The meetings are scheduled from 9:00 to 11:30 a.m. and locations may vary, but will be announced on the meeting agenda.

We would like to communicate with you via e-mail. If you do not receive a copy of this agenda electronically, we probably don't have your e-mail address. If you know of other staff in your department who are interested in attending these meetings, please forward this information to them and have them contact STC to be added to the mailing list.

Contact Susan Coats at (916) 324-4055 or e-mail susancoats@dpa.ca.gov.